

ACQUISITION OF LAND TO CONNECT THE PARKWAY BETWEEN
ROCK CREEK PARK, ZOOLOGICAL PARK, AND POTOMAC PARK

FEBRUARY 18, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
state of the Union and ordered to be printed

MR. REED of West Virginia, from the Committee on the District of
Columbia, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 12213]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 12213) to enable the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway Commission to complete the acquisition of land required for a connecting parkway between the Rock Creek Park, the Zoological Park, and Potomac Park, having considered the same, report it back to the House with the recommendation that it do pass.

The purpose of this bill is to authorize an appropriation of \$600,000 to complete the acquisition of land necessary for this connecting parkway. Condemnation proceedings had been instituted in February, 1923; 17 requests have since been filed and 6 of them are now pending in the Supreme Court.

The urgent need for the enactment of this proposed legislation is set forth in the following statement from the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway Commission:

At the time these requests were filed with the Department of Justice, it was understood that regardless of whether or not the commission had sufficient funds available, the Attorney General could proceed to condemn the property and then the President of the United States in approving the award would recommend to Congress that sufficient funds be made available to pay it. Since these original requests were filed, and quite recently, the commission has been notified by the Attorney General that he does not feel it would be fair to the property owners to subject them to the burden and expense of litigating these cases, knowing that there is no money available to pay the awards. The Attorney General states further that it would be very unjust to the property owners to subject their properties to clouds upon the titles occasioned by further proceedings with the cases filed, or by the filing of new cases, and therefore under all circumstances, he is compelled to take the position that the Department of Justice is justified in not proceeding further with these cases until an appropriation to pay such awards as may be rendered has been made.

In the Budget submitted to Congress there was no appropriation whatever for carrying on this commission, thus virtually abolishing the activities of the com-

mission without removing its responsibilities, as carried in the basic act approved March 4, 1913. It was the intention of the officials of the Bureau of the Budget to throw the responsibility of the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway Commission upon the National Capital Park Commission. The idea of merging these two commissions was rejected by Congress at the time the National Capital Parkway Commission was created.

Under date of January 7, 1925, the commission forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget a deficiency estimate for \$700,000. The act of March 4, 1913 authorized an expenditure of \$1,300,000 toward the acquisition of the land required for the connecting parkway, as shown on the map filed in the office of the engineer commissioner of the District. In order to keep within this authorized sum, the areas shown on this above referred to map were modified, as shown on Map No. 2, in House Document 1114, of the Sixty-fourth Congress, first session. There has been already appropriated \$1,200,000, leaving a balance under this original authorization of \$100,000 unappropriated. This estimate provided that the sum authorized to be expended in section 2 of the act of March 4, 1913, be increased to \$1,900,000.

The Director of the Bureau of the Budget, under date of January 28, in reply to this estimate, stated that in view of the limitation of \$1,300,000 prescribed in the act of March 4, 1913, he would not be justified in recommending to the President that there be presented to Congress an estimate in excess of \$100,000. He however states that it would not be in conflict with the financial program of the President for the commission to request legislation which would authorize a further appropriation not exceeding \$600,000, for the purpose of acquiring the remaining outstanding privately owned land.

